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# Extension Service *Review*

VOLUME 18

JULY 1947

NO. 7

## Farm labor — action in education

TO MEMBERS OF

THE COOPERATIVE AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE:

No one knows better than farmers the important job which the Cooperative Agricultural Extension Service has done in helping to solve difficult farm labor problems of the war and the world food emergency that followed. In many counties the task of stretching the short labor supply to accomplish larger production has taxed resourcefulness of experienced county agents. But somehow, somehow, the "impossible" was accomplished. The efforts of county and State Extension workers and local advisory committees of farmers and townspeople in developing organized plans for exchange of machinery and labor, promoting better work methods, labor-saving devices and other possible means of increasing output per worker, marshaling unusual sources of labor within the county, cooperating with other counties and States in fuller utilization of workers during slack periods, and making local arrangements to insure effective use of prisoners of war and foreign workers, constituted a major wartime accomplishment.

The record speaks for itself. American farmers in the face of labor shortages and other production difficulties established and maintained yearly production of agricultural commodities during the war years far in excess of any prewar period. It is difficult to evaluate fully what that record production meant to winning of the war and advancement of peace. It is not pleasant to contemplate the consequences had food production fallen seriously short of goals.

Local educational representatives of the Department and the State Agricultural Colleges have once again demonstrated their ability to direct "action" programs in an emergency. Every Extension Service employee—county, State, and Federal—in any way associated with the Farm Labor Program has the satisfaction of patriotic service effectively performed in a national emergency. The Department of Agriculture has reason to be proud of its cooperative employees in Extension, serving farmers in the 3,000 agricultural counties of the Nation.

■ Since early 1943 extension agents have been "officially" concerned with the important problem of assisting farmers with the labor side of production. Supervision of the emergency farm labor supply program, with its many ramifications, including reports on agricultural deferrees for Selective Service use, has been a wartime and reconversion responsibility which State and county workers have accepted as another opportunity to serve rural people in the interests of the whole Nation.

This issue of the REVIEW is devoted exclusively to farm labor, primarily as an accounting to extension workers everywhere of the manner in which the difficult wartime assignment has been carried out.

### Made to Order for Job

The system of well-trained, experienced personnel in whom farm people had confidence, located in every agricultural county, was made to order for the farm labor job. It was experienced in handling emergencies. During World War I years, the then newly created Cooperative Extension Service under the Smith-Lever Act participated in the emergency food production and conservation campaigns. Later it was called upon to help get under way emergency agricultural projects, such as the first AAA program and the drought-cattle purchase program of the early thirties.

Fortunately, the Farm Labor Supply Appropriation Act provided ample funds with which to employ the additional full time and temporary personnel needed to do the farm labor job. It was equally fortunate that

(Continued on page 93)



*Clinton P. Anderson*

Secretary of Agriculture.

# Who does the farm work?

■ Many times when we discuss or write about progress and accomplishments of American agriculture we neglect to give due credit to its greatest resource, the farm people. It is the 27 million people who live on the land, plus thousands of additional hired workers, who are responsible for production of food and fiber for domestic needs and some for export.

During the 1935-39 period, an annual average of 10,920,000 workers were employed in agriculture. Farm operators and unpaid family workers made up about three-fourths and hired workers one-fourth of this total force. Of the hired group, consisting of approximately 2,568,000 workers, about 30 percent were year-round hands; more than one-half were local seasonal workers, and one-seventh were migratory workers who followed the crop season from one area to another.

During the prewar period an adequate supply of labor was usually on hand when needed, except in small isolated areas. Local labor was available for short-time employment, and considerable numbers moved from one area to another seeking employment. Farmers could hire help needed for a day, a week, or for the entire season.

As the war clouds began to gather over Europe and eventually spread throughout the world, agriculture was not spared the necessity of making changes required for total mobilization. Industry converted and expanded to make the weapons of war. New industries mushroomed throughout the land. America quickly became the arsenal of democracy. Job opportunities and high wages in these war industries increased by leaps and bounds. This provided an opportunity for many agricultural workers to get back into industrial work from which they were forced during the depression thirties. Workers by the thousands flocked to the towns and cities.

With entry of United States into war, young able-bodied men and women by the millions were inducted into armed services. Those who were left behind were expected to hold the

home front. In spite of shortages of labor and machinery, demands for food increased with the war tempo.

To meet these demands new labor sources had to be found. The Federal Government appropriated funds to establish the program to assist in finding this labor. Farmers used more efficient methods than ever before to reduce labor needs to a minimum. They pooled their limited labor and machinery resources and stretched them as far as possible. Through organization, education and information programs in each community, local non-farm people were recruited into platoons and twilight crews.

Older men who had retired to less strenuous work went back to the farm. Women and youth responded by the thousands and rendered an outstanding service in filling the gap left by those who marched to war. Industrial workers spent vacation, weekend, and after-shift periods in harvest fields; troops were assigned as units in a few limited areas to prevent crop loss. Conscientious objectors, Japanese evacuees, and inmates of penal institutions did farm work. Members of military services spent

furloughs and extra leaves picking fruits and vegetables. Crews of foreign vessels docking at American ports obtained shore leave to harvest crops which their countrymen so sorely needed.

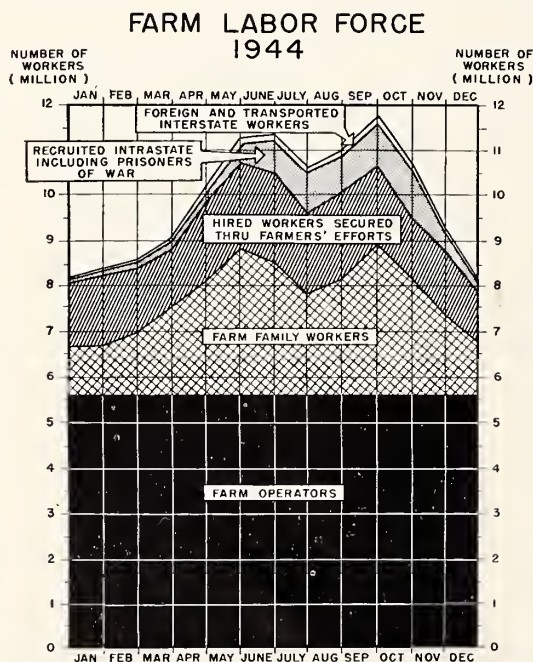
Through government assistance foreign workers were recruited and transported by Office of Labor (Labor Branch PMA) from Mexico, Jamaica, Bahama, Canada, Newfoundland, and Barbados for employment in areas where domestic resources were inadequate. The Department of War made prisoners of war available for agricultural work. Both of these groups were at their height in 1945 when there were 95,000 foreign workers and 128,000 prisoners of war at peak periods, in a total labor force of 2,725,000 workers placed in the whole program.

Domestic workers were recruited and transported at government expense to areas where distance or length of employment prevented the employer or worker from bearing these costs.

Through these emergency efforts of millions of people the farmers met every challenge. They produced one-third more food with 10 percent less labor—one of the wonders of America's wartime accomplishment.

The coming of peace did not bring any let-down for farmers. Need for food did not end when the last shot was fired. The goals continue high and 1947 goals call for acreages greater than 1946 plantings. Neither did peace cause a large return of workers to farms as some had expected.

The downward trend in numbers has been halted, but high industrial employment continues to absorb many thousands of workers formerly engaged in agriculture. Many farm boys who left for military service have taken industrial jobs and probably will never return to agricultural work. Therefore, agriculture will have to rely for some time on many of the sources of labor used during the war period.





# Youth lends a hand

■ In the spring of 1944 labor was a scarce commodity in South Carolina's cotton and tobacco country. Florence County farmers were considerably worried. And they were hardly any happier about the situation when County Agent J. W. McLendon suggested bringing in a few city boys from Charleston to live and work on their farms.

You can imagine their reaction, for it was the same story—country over. City kids! What could they do? Wouldn't they be more bother than worth? It took some persuading on the part of Farm Labor Assistant E. D. Sallenger, Jr., but the extension staff finally succeeded in placing 19 boys on farms for the summer. Sixteen of these stayed through the season and did a good job.

Nearly everyone was a little surprised at the results. Word got around to other farms. Farmers who had boys ordered them again the next year. And when spring of 1945 rolled around, 100 farmers requested boys. Actual placements totaled 58, but the high number of requests shows how farmers changed their attitude about town youth.

Here is a story that could be written for many another county—in every part of the Nation. Nonfarm youth were an unknown quantity in the beginning. Some berry and vegetable growers had relied on them for harvesting operations in years past; but farmers as a whole put little stock in city boys and girls, for many of these new recruits were not offering to work because they needed a job or the money. Farmers were especially skeptical about housing a "green" city youngster in the farm home and making even a substitute "hired man" out of him. And many a county agent shared this skepticism.

But the youth program stuck—through war and reconversion. Extension placements amounted to as many as a million and a half in one war year. Backed by a good platoon system in Oregon, the youth program made a big contribution to the Northwest's fruit and vegetable production. Based on a sound program of supervision and selection, good "live-in" help was provided for the general and dairy



Herman Bresciani came from Willock, Pa., to work on the Elton Clifford farm in Windsor County, Vt. It was a happy combination, as this picture of Farmer Clifford and Herman indicates.

farms of New England, New York, Pennsylvania, Minnesota, and others. Surveys show how much farmers liked these live-ins. Ninety percent of the Maine farmers who reported liked their boy as a worker, and 87 percent of 2,210 boys in Minnesota were considered successful.

In Iowa and Utah, more than half of Extension's placements last year were boys and girls. At least a third of the farm labor placements were youth in Idaho, Oklahoma, Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, New Jersey, and the Southern Cotton States. Teen-agers last year picked 90 percent of the snapbeans in Maine, 65 percent of Idaho's potatoes, and detasseled a whopping big part of the Midwest's hybrid seed corn—75 percent, for instance, in Illinois. In Kansas, an estimated 10,000 nonfarm youth did farm work, mostly in the wheat harvest.

The largest percentage of the Nation's Victory Farm Volunteers work as "day-hauls"—something like 80 percent, including youth in farm labor camps. The others are placed in farm homes.

Farmers did not reform their opinions about youth labor overnight. Some youngsters were not successful on the farm. But extension workers and farmers soon figured out the reasons. Learning by experience, they brought about improvements in re-

cruitment and selection. Placement men came to be more careful about the farms where youth were placed and the employment records of growers. Gradually they learned the necessity of adult control, and many a farmer paid willingly the wages for a supervisor when he saw how supervision increased the work output.

Other factors made youth a useful type of labor. There was the hearty cooperation of the school people who gave many overtime hours to recruitment and supervision, the assistance of youth agencies, the backing of parents who wanted their youngsters to have new experiences and at the same time help farmers produce food. And most importantly, there were the State and county extension people who made use of their experience with 4-H Clubbers, who listened to words of wisdom from others who had handled youth, and who assumed an interest in the welfare of the boys and girls as well as the farmers whom they have traditionally served.

Youth deserve a big share of the credit, of course, for their willing desire to help and anxiety to prove they could "take it." And several other factors made the youth program click—there are in the program the byproducts of practical education, improved rural-urban relationships, and better working conditions for the boy and girl workers in agriculture.



# Farmers organize to meet labor needs

■ Farmers over the years have met many of their pressing problems through teamwork of cooperative associations. Use of cooperative methods in utilization of farm labor is comparatively new. Today 400 farmers' cooperatives from coast to coast view with satisfaction the valuable services they have performed for their members and others in the field of farm labor.

Many existing cooperative associations whose primary purposes are other than the handling of farm labor have taken on this function. Other cooperatives have incorporated chiefly to operate for their members in the utilization of labor. Still other unincorporated groups and committees have been established only to contract for foreign labor.

Many associations now recognize the possibilities of cooperative action in the utilization of migratory and other domestic farm workers. Programs affecting recruitment, transportation, housing, and general welfare of workers are becoming more extensive. The growth of cooperative farm labor activities is partly reflected by the recent organization of various State federations of cooperative farm labor associations.

Assistance in organization of farm labor associations has been given usually by the Extension Service of the State in which the association was established. Some assistance in preparing the corporate structures and governing regulations has been given also by attorneys versed in cooperative law and practice, who worked with Extension.

In New York, where, in 1943, one farm labor association had operated successfully, there were 40 farm labor associations at the end of 1946. Of these, 31 associations with approximately 1,900 members were active during the 1946 season. These organizations sponsored 33 labor camps, housing approximately 4,000 workers at peak season. Many employers had their own housing, and the figure quoted does not include all migrant, interstate, foreign, and other workers furnished through the associations.

The New York associations had total receipts of \$1,900,000. This figure includes wages collected by the associations from employers and paid to workers. It is estimated that with wages paid direct by employers to workers, the earnings of all workers recruited by the New York associations were in excess of \$2,400,000.

An association specialist employed by the New York Extension Service has worked closely with cooperatives in that State. Other specialists of the Extension Service there assist the cooperatives in housing, engineering, camp management, food supervision, labor utilization, and migrant worker contacts.

Generally, farm labor associations are located in areas of specialized farming. Michigan Field Crops, Inc., a State-wide organization, has as members 18 local associations of growers of beets, beans, tomatoes, and cucumbers. Michigan's Farm Labor Services, State-wide in character, has 6 associations of fruit growers as members. Five associations of Michigan's muck crop growers have carried out farm labor functions on behalf of members.

California's wartime production resulted in the functioning of 74 farm labor associations. Of these, 37 plan to continue, and 12 had in 1946 converted to use of domestic workers. All have established camps. Eleven associations in Tulare County have invested in camp property in amounts varying from \$15,000 to \$60,000.

Other States in which farm labor cooperatives function in varying degrees include Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, Arkansas, Texas, Nebraska, South Dakota, Colorado, Wyoming, Montana, Idaho, Utah, Washington, and Oregon.

There is a growing recognition on the part of farmer-employers that good housing and appropriate attention to the needs of workers pay dividends in attracting a satisfactory labor supply. Less turn-over of labor is experienced, and, generally, the quantity and quality of labor output are increased where living conditions are good. The programs of many cooperatives point toward improved living conditions for workers and their families.

Illustratively, cooperatives in New York look increasingly to migrant workers as a source of labor. There is not sufficient housing on farms of employers to accommodate all needed workers. Associations have made





marked progress in management of central housing for workers. Migratory workers appreciate good housing. "Livability" in housing attracts and satisfies workers. The associations have attempted with reasonable success to provide such housing. The Wayne County Growers' and Processors' Association, Inc., camp at Williamson, N. Y., is pictured on page 84.

The Wiscoy Growers' Cooperative Association, Inc., operating at Pike, Wyoming County, N. Y., also has provided satisfactory camp housing facilities for migrant workers in the potato harvest. Efforts of this and other co-operatives have resulted in admission of children of migrant workers to public schools in areas of parents' employment.

A farm labor association in Santa Cruz County, Calif., in constructing a camp to accommodate 50 Mexican-American families has provided for recreational facilities, a school, and a church, and is planning for medical services.

Housing of labor has been a major function of farm labor associations in various other States.

Cooperative associations appear to be well adapted to promote good relationships between migratory workers and the communities.

The first task of the New York State Federation of Growers' and Processors' Associations, Inc., was to arrange for a child-care program for migrant farm labor camps, most of which cost was met by State appropriation.

John Hartman, Longmont, Colo., farmer, speaking of farm labor associations at the Colorado Farm Labor Conference at Denver in March, said the associations were needed and highly useful during the past 4 years. He believes they should continue to operate during peacetime in areas requiring outside labor. A State-wide federation would increase associations' effectiveness, he said.

There are indications that difficult and complex farm labor situations will yet be met for an extended period. Many cooperatives can serve their members effectively in those situations in which recruitment, transportation, training, housing, and general welfare of workers continue to present problems. Cooperatives are assuming larger and more definite responsibilities in this field.

## Housing is a bottleneck

■ "There has been some labor shortage, but this is due to a lack of housing rather than to availability of workers." So read a weekly report from the emergency farm labor office in Yakima County, Wash. Similar reports were being received from most other counties. The housing situation had the State office so worried that it did something about it.

George M. Phipps, emergency field assistant in Yakima County, tells the story:

"Housing conditions on the farms are improving. During 1945, we had a housing committee consisting of the manager of the chamber of commerce, a fruit grower, manager of the Horticultural Union, and myself. We succeeded in locating 200 houses in Vancouver, Wash. After the committee had inspected these houses, an advertisement was placed in the papers advising growers to contact the farm labor office for information. One hundred and twenty-eight 4-room houses were sold in the county, with all but 20 of them going to farms.

"Local lumber yards were asked what they could do regarding farm housing. One was doing something about it. Persons calling at my office were referred to this lumber company regarding cabins. As a result, 855 units were placed on farms in 1946.

"We got in touch with 2 men who had bought 88 large buildings at Hanford. They advised us that they wanted to open an office when they could find one, so I told them they could have space in my office, provided the lumber be sold to farmers or veterans. They were glad to accept this offer. A girl was placed in the office to help handle the orders. Over 2 million feet of lumber and half a million square feet of sheet rock were sold, with 70 percent going to farmers.

"In addition to many units built with this salvaged lumber, we were able to get some farmers to tear down old buildings and rebuild cabins for workers. Other farmers were able to get lumber from some source or another and build cabins, too. In all, we know of more than 1,000 units that

were put up on farms in Yakima County in 1946.

"One reason for a good balance of labor at this time is found in efforts made during the past 12 months to increase housing facilities."

What shall we do for housing?—a common enough question in farm labor shortage areas. Many things were done. Plans were made available to farmers, plans for housing single or married workers, seasonal and year-round workers—multiple houses and single houses, camp layouts with sleeping, feeding, sanitary, recreational, and child-care facilities. Overnight rest stops where migrants can clean up and rest also provide places where they can be told of work opportunities.

The need is to get the local people to see what the problem is and how it affects them. When this is done, they will meet the necessary cost.

Extension has found it necessary to help operate some farm labor camps during the emergency period. In 1943 there were 283 in operation that had received some financial support from emergency farm labor funds. This number increased to 325 in 1944, 404 in 1945, then dropped off to 277 in 1946. These camps housed more than 43,000 different individuals in 1943, 65,000 in 1944, and 97,000 in 1945. Last year their occupancy declined to 78,000.

## Good housing attracts

Providing good farm housing for farm labor is not the final responsibility of the farm employer. The good farm employer follows up good housing with some supervision to protect his property and to improve the living standards of his workers.

Farmers who check on the housing standards of their workers will have better workers. If large crews are employed, it is well to give one individual the responsibility of supervising housing to keep the grounds and housing in a clean and sanitary condition.—*New Jersey "Farm Labor News Notes."*



# Migrants gather ripening crops

■ Each year, during the "slack season" at home, 600,000 people travel to areas with high seasonal farm labor requirements. Many follow well-established routes. Helping to make their work and their travel from area to area and State to State more efficient is an important function of the Farm Labor Program.

During the winter months Jimmie Taylor and Johnnie Belle Taylor, his wife, live in the Okeechobee Camp, operated by the Labor Branch, Production and Marketing Administration. From December to May, he and his wife harvest celery and pick beans for farmers living near Belle Glade, Fla.

The Taylors came to the Belle Glade area from Dawson, Ga., in 1940. Each May they have moved north "after the work grows slow in this section." Jimmie saved enough from his earnings from 1940 to 1944 to purchase a truck in the spring of 1944 and a second truck in 1945. He is taking four other families with him as they travel north to work in North Carolina and New York. The "crew" includes 10 men, 16 women, and 10 children.

During the winter, Jimmie kept in touch with the Belle Glade farm-labor office, not only to obtain work locally but to learn of conditions in the States to the north. He got an identification card and left on May 13. En route to North Carolina, he stopped at the farm labor information stations at Gross, Fla., and Wilmington, N. C.

Harold Potter, of Aurora, felt better about his labor supply when his county agent told him that word had been received from the Belle Glade office late in April that Taylor had stopped in and indicated that he was planning to work for him again in 1947. Potter hadn't had a letter from Taylor since early in February. The agent of Chenango County, N. Y., was also reassured when he was advised that Taylor had stopped at the Florida and North Carolina information stations and had indicated that he planned to work at Sherburne, N. Y.

O. W. Nealy, former Negro county agent in Alachua County, Fla., visited with Taylor at Aurora. Nealy is now a "migrant specialist" and travels up

and down the Atlantic Coast with the workers.

When they finish in North Carolina the crew plans to go to New York where they will live in the cabin camp at Sherburne, remodeled in 1946 to meet the requirements of the New York Labor Camp Code. The children under 14 will be encouraged to report to the child-care center while their parents and older brothers and sisters work in the fields.

Not all of the 600,000 people who will engage in seasonal farm work at such a distance from their homes that they cannot return each evening will find housing as satisfactory as that occupied by Jimmie Taylor and his crew. Most of them will be able to get information on job opportunities and housing.

## Harvest Guides

Guides for migrant workers are available, one for each of the areas involved in a major migratory movement. "A Guide to Farm Jobs Along Western Highways" gives job housing information for Arizona, California, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, and Washington. Information for those planning to work in any of the 14 north and south Central States is given in "A Guide to Farm Jobs from Gulf to Great Lakes." There are

"guides" that give general information regarding job opportunities in 11 Atlantic Coast States; in the 10 Plains States requiring migrant workers and combines in the wheat and small grain harvest; in the 13 sugar beet States to which Latin-Americans migrate from Texas; and in the Texas cotton harvest.

Each guide shows, on State maps, the areas where the seasonal farm labor requirements are so high that the numbers of local workers available are inadequate. They also show the usual dates when workers from outside the area are needed for various types of work.

Weekly reports regarding crop conditions, housing, and farm labor need and supply flow from county offices to State offices to the area office. The area office for each program, Berkeley in the West, Little Rock in the Central, and Washington in the East, assembles and duplicates these reports. They flow back to State offices, information stations, and county offices.

This flow of current information enables the county agent at Mountain Home, Ark., to tell the small farmer who has "laid by" his own crop whether there is need for wheat harvest hands in western Kansas; cherry pickers in northern Michigan, or hop pickers in Washington's Yakima Valley. Such information may





save this farmer and his family many miles of needless travel and may influence them to help out in an area where there is danger of crop loss unless additional workers come in from the outside.

Many workers leave home without visiting their county agent. If some of these workers were to stop at the farm labor information station at Green River, Wyo., on August 5, they could find out whether workers are needed to pick cherries in Utah, to harvest vegetables in Idaho, to pick prunes in California, to pick hops in Oregon, or to pick pears in Washington. They can also find out what wages are being paid and what type of housing will be available to them in each area. Green River is located on U. S. Route 30, east of where this main traveled route branches to the North and South.

The other 45 information stations are also located on the main traveled highways between areas of seasonal farm employment. Besides giving information to workers they also collect information regarding the areas in which they plan to work. This information is valuable to States, counties, and individual employers in appraising the labor supply likely to be available at periods of peak need.

### Overnight Facilities

It is sometimes hard for a group of migrants to find a place to cook, bathe, and sleep while en route between areas of employment or before they are located on a job. More than 50 Texas communities have met this need by establishing "reception centers" with the help of the Extension Service. Arizona, Arkansas, Maryland, Mississippi, and Michigan have provided similar facilities.

There are 35 extension employees who are commonly referred to as liaison men or migrant specialists. They gain the confidence of the migrant workers and help them with their problems just as a county agent gains the confidence of the farmers of a county. However, these migrant specialists travel from area to area with the workers as they "follow the crops." Thirty-two of these men are Texans who speak Spanish and work with the Latin-Americans who harvest cotton and work in sugar beets.

Farmers have already made many improvements in their migrant housing, and more housing will be constructed when materials are available. Communities supported by a type of agriculture that requires migrant workers are recognizing their responsibilities in regard to the welfare of these people, particularly the educational needs of migrant children.

However, many problems are not yet solved. The job of helping 600,000 rural people to find satisfactory employment and living conditions and of helping them to become a stable and reliable source of seasonal labor in each of the many areas where they are needed for relatively short periods of time continues to be a real challenge to extension workers.

## Wheat army sweeps 10 States

■ This month the wheat harvest is in full swing, and again the machines and the laborers are there to bring in the golden grain. Beginning about May 15 in Texas the ripening grain line moves along north and west at the rate of 100 to 125 miles per week. By early August the harvest will be in full swing in North Dakota and Montana and then move into the Canadian provinces.

The war years brought increased production and new machines even to replace worn-out ones were difficult to obtain. One of the big jobs for the Extension Service of the Plains States was that of helping grain farmers get the machines and harvest labor they needed. To get the job done required full utilization of all available machinery and labor, with the addition of from 4,000 to 4,500 custom combines and about 40,000 harvest hands from outside the area.

Kansas is in the heart of the wheat area, and the operation of the farm labor office at Great Bend illustrates the cooperative system worked out during the last 4 years to meet wartime harvest needs.

The office is opened about 10 days before the season opens and operates until all wheat is harvested. Two supervisors with secretarial help man the office.

Just before the season opens in earnest, a survey is made in each county to determine harvest needs, and this information comes to Great Bend so that a State summary can be prepared.

As the season opens, this information is sent to Great Bend daily. A night letter from each county reports on the progress of the harvest,

weather conditions, and needs for men and combines or, as the season advances, the number of surplus machines and men that are available for other areas.

Great Bend is a beehive of activity. At 8 in the morning, the night letters are tabulated and summarized and are ready for use by 9 or 9:30. Then the telephone calls are put through to agents reporting surplus so that they can direct workers to areas of need. At the same time, news and radio stories are prepared for release at 11 a. m. The news goes to local representatives of the press wire services; the radio message goes out over the local station with spot announcements also wired to the extension editor at Manhattan to be given over 15 radio stations. These spot announcements are heard at noon over many stations, and the press releases make many of the evening papers. Kansas people can follow the progress of the harvest from day to day.

The afternoon opens with a daily news letter mimeographed and mailed to all county agents and others interested. This gives details on the needs of each county and also the needs of other States in the Great Plains where harvest is in progress. Daily contact is maintained with each of these States.

Offices similar to Great Bend will be found in every State in the Wheat Belt during harvest. This organized program supplies the needs of all farmers and custom combine operators; harvest hands waste no time getting from job to job, and congestion of labor and machines in some areas and shortage in others is kept to a minimum. The plan works.



# It came like a bolt from the blue

■ Assignment of wartime responsibility for farm labor supply to the Cooperative Agricultural Extension Service on January 25, 1943, came with the suddenness of a bolt of lightning, just before a downpour. It was only a few days prior to transfer of "responsibility in connection with farm labor . . . in order that agricultural production might be met," by the War Manpower Commission to the Department of Agriculture, that any advance information indicated possibility of Extension being "drafted" to organize and operate a war emergency farm labor program, including all farm placement activities previously performed by United States Employment Service.

Ominous storm clouds had been gathering. Difficulties encountered in 1942's harvest and prospect of hundreds of thousands of young men leaving farms for armed services and war industries had caused farmers to become jittery regarding 1943 production of large quantities of food and fiber crops. Decisive action was necessary to assure farmers that adequate farm labor assistance would be forthcoming if they undertook the enormous job.

## Like a Hot Potato

Extension's wartime advisory committee, hurriedly called to Washington by Director M. L. Wilson, recognized labor as the *indispensable key* to production, and immediately accepted the farm labor assignment. The slogan, "Food Will Win the War," was a burning reminder that failure to maintain agricultural production might be disastrous to successful prosecution of the war. State and Federal Extension administrators were not unaware of the "hot potato" being dropped in their laps, but recognized the peculiar fitness of the county extension system to meet an agricultural production situation rapidly becoming desperate.

Seasoned extension agents in more than 3,000 counties had current knowledge of production problems, and even more important, they had the confidence of farmers. In addition, the Nation-wide system of extension neighborhood leaders com-

pleted at the outset of the war provided a direct 2-way medium for quickly contacting 6,000,000 farmers.

Prior to War Manpower Directive XVII of January 25, 1943, Extension had assumed leadership in developing a program for utilizing town and city youth in summer work on farms. The Office of Education and the United States Employment Service assisted in this development. Extension had also made a start in exploring possibilities of a women's land army.



Chiefs of the Federal Extension Farm Labor staff hold frequent pow-wows in seeking solutions to farm labor problems. Here left to right, they are: R. W. Oberlin, recruitment and placement; Dr. Barnard Joy, assistant deputy director; Dr. L. M. Vaughan, labor utilization; Meredith C. Wilson, deputy director of Extension, in charge farm labor program; Miss Florence Hall, Women's Land Army; and I. H. Schmitt, Victory Farm Volunteers.

Unfortunately, the transfer of responsibility for farm labor to Agriculture was not accompanied by operating funds. Three months were required to clear estimates with Bureau of the Budget and get an appropriation from Congress, through Public Law 45, approved by the President on April 29, 1943.

The intervening time was utilized in selection of Federal and State personnel, and in conferences to discuss problems and develop operating procedures. State and county farm labor advisory committees were organized or reconstituted. Field machinery was put in readiness to move in high gear when the green light flashed.

Early months of 1943 brought frequent changes in the Department's set-up to stimulate food production. These usually meant changes in

handling farm labor at the Federal level. In late March the situation began to stabilize with creation of War Food Administration. Chester C. Davis became Administrator, and J. L. Taylor, Deputy Administrator, was in charge of farm labor.

When Public Law 45 (Public Law 229 since 1944) as act of the Congress superseded War Manpower Directive XVII, authority to the Department and the State Extension Services became clear-cut. In War Food Administration and Cooperative Extension Service there was complete responsibility for assisting farmers with labor problems.

Under the Farm Labor Supply Appropriation Act funds were allotted to Extension Services of land-grant colleges and universities to handle problems within their respective States. Remaining funds were made available for importation of foreign labor, transportation of domestic labor across State lines, operation of farm labor camps built by Farm Security Administration and general administration of the program.

On the Federal level relations with States cleared through the Federal Extension Service. An Office of Labor (now Labor Branch, PMA), was established to handle foreign workers and federally owned camps. Because quick action was required in emergencies, a special organization was set up at Federal and State levels in Extension Service to direct the program.



This did not reflect lack of integration with regular extension activities. It merely provided direct operating channels and facilitated budgets and related financial matters.

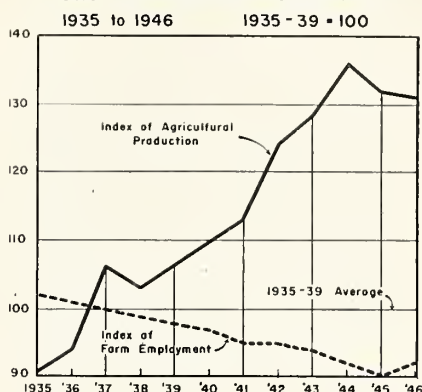
For the most part, experienced personnel was selected from Extension ranks for key administrative and supervisory positions. The farm labor functions of the Federal Extension Service were divided among four organizational units: Recruitment and Placement, Victory Farm Volunteers (youth), Women's Land Army, and Labor Utilization. Responsibility for information services was assigned to the Division of Extension Information which worked closely with Office of War Information. In the States, information work was the responsibility of the extension editors.

### County Agents at Helm

The county extension agent directed the program within each county, with such field and office assistants as labor load demanded. Neighborhoods and communities were organized to meet demands through exchange of labor and equipment. With the aid of advisory committees, extension agents determined the amount of out-of-county labor needed. When these needs could not be met through local recruitment and transfers of workers between counties, the State Extension Farm Labor Office certified the need for interstate transportation of foreign workers to be supplied by the Department. The supply of able-bodied agricultural workers constantly shrank as the war advanced, and the practical procedure became one of States obtaining a maximum allotment of foreign workers and then stretching the available domestic workers—youth, women, old men, townspeople—to do those remaining jobs which contributed most to full production.

With agricultural production goals up one-third and the farm labor force down one-tenth, Extension's task in many counties quickly became one of increasing output per worker through improved work methods, labor-saving devices, training of workers and similar means which would enable two less-able workers of the war period to produce nearly as much as three skilled workers had produced in the prewar years.

## AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION and FARM EMPLOYMENT



When the Tydings amendment to the Selective Service Act provided for deferring of essential farm workers, hard-pressed county agents were called upon to shoulder new responsibilities. Production information was needed as the basis on which County USDA War Boards could make recommendations to Selective Service regarding farm boys and other farm workers called to the colors. Rechecking frequently was necessary. During three years, 1944-46, county agents or their farm labor assistants furnished 2,029,304 reports on agricultural deferrees.

### War Prisoners Go to Work

When the War Department made prisoners-of-war available for agricultural work in 1944, extension agents had the task of making employment arrangements and guiding establishment of branch camps close to important production areas. Getting satisfactory work output from prisoners, at first a real problem, disappeared as experience was acquired. Throughout the prisoner-of-war program which ended in June 1946, relationships with the War Department were most satisfactory.

The 1943 growing season was well advanced when Public Law 45 was enacted. Difficulty in finding suitable personnel caused 28 States to take advantage of a provision in the act to contract with United States Employment Service for certain services. After a few months' experience several States felt that a more satisfactory job could be done with personnel in counties under the supervision of extension agents familiar with agricultural

problems. Twelve States contracted with USES in 1944; 11 in 1945; and 10 in 1946. Currently but five States have contracts with State Employment Services for the performance of limited farm labor services.

The question of dollar-cost was far overshadowed from the outset by greater importance of adequate supplies of food and fiber. State Extension Services receiving allotments of funds insisted upon dollar-value for dollar expenditure. The practice of working closely with advisory committees of farmers and local businessmen frequently resulted in facilities and services being obtained at nominal costs. Employing local persons on a part time or per diem basis during periods of peak demands rather than building a large permanent farm labor staff also was important in keeping costs down.

### Farm Labor Paid Its Own Way

Farm Labor has been the outstanding exception to the all too frequent practice of asking county extension agents to assume responsibility in emergency programs without additional funds for extra personnel.

Funds for the farm labor program have been appropriated on a calendar year basis. Each succeeding appropriation has consolidated new funds with previous appropriations thereby making unencumbered balances available for use in the succeeding year. During four years, 1943-46, the Congress provided \$101,100,000 for the entire program. Of that amount \$28,876,069 was available to States in connection with intrastate farm labor and \$2,698,879 was available to the Federal Extension Service for administrative and supervisory expenses, but principally for interstate labor transportation in 1945 and 1946. The remaining \$69,525,052 went to the Labor Branch, PMA, for the foreign labor program, operation of federal farm labor camps, 1943-44 interstate labor transportation, health and medical care, field operations and overall administration including small allocations to Department staff offices. In addition to this federal money, several States provided substantial funds for use in youth, farm labor housing, and other specific phases of the program.



# Townspeople came through

H. A. HAMILTON, County Extension Director, Cedar County, Iowa

■ Faced with an all-out production problem, Iowa farmers knew they must have additional help to reach their wartime goals. The emergency farm labor program, starting in 1943 and still functioning, was developed on a county basis in Iowa.

Cedar County, like other agricultural counties the Nation over, tried to use every means to find the necessary labor locally. A county farm labor advisory committee was formed. Local farm labor representatives were named for each town in the county.

First step after organization was to chart the labor requirements and on-the-farm supply of labor available in the county. In addition to finding additional labor for the planting and harvesting of oats, corn, and soybeans, and for putting up hay, Cedar County had a specialized problem of corn detasseling. Finally, there was the problem of harvesting tomato and sweet corn crops to be processed in the adjacent county.

Early in May, efforts were made to enroll all nonfarm youth. Most of these were more anxious to detassel corn than to accept steady farm work. However, a number of boys were used for general farm work by the day. They were particularly good for such jobs as pulling sourdock, putting in baled hay, and shocking oats.

Businessmen were organized into crews for harvest work. Cooperation of such groups as the Tipton Junior Chamber of Commerce, the Greater Tipton Club, and community organizations, in other towns was obtained in this program. The crews started work usually about 5:30 or 6 p. m. and continued until dark. They were busy in the field practically every night during June and July, and some worked Sunday afternoons. As many as 100 workers went out from Tipton in a single day.

Farmers everywhere were not only appreciative but surprised at the amount of work these groups did. During the summer of 1944, 320 businessmen furnished 9,060 man-hours of labor on 399 farms. Local labor centers through the county received requests for 2,140 workers from 1,421

farmers in 1944. Only 116 of these worker orders went unfilled.

A major problem was detasseling. It was estimated that 450 to 600 workers would be needed for the 3,000 acres of hybrid corn within the county. Tipton's athletic coach was employed by the local hybrid corn company to canvass every town. Lists of youth were obtained from school authorities, and the home of each youngster was visited. Usually a person familiar in the community was hired to accompany the coach. Help-wanted advertisements were inserted in local papers.

Nothing proved quite so effective as the personal interview. It required time and money, but it got results. There were 587 applications made for detasseling work in 1944 as a result of this program.

Demand for women workers increased from season to season. Corn companies said they were somewhat slower than men; but they were thorough, and required less supervision than imported workers. Detasseling machines, constructed so that workers could ride on platforms and work as many as six rows at a time, speeded the jobs.

After a public hearing, prevailing

pay for detasseling was set at 60 cents per hour. The county advisory committee recommended this, plus 5 cents per mile for traveling, as a fair rate for other emergency farm labor such as the harvest crews of businessmen.

As part of our educational program we continually urged farmers to work with their neighbors and asked them to share what machinery they had. An earlier phase of the program was the machinery repair campaign.

The 1944 Iowa Crop Corps Honor Roll listed the Cedar County businessmen in first place on group awards. The roll, designed to encourage the emergency farm labor program, was sponsored for 3 war years by Radio Station WHO, Des Moines, in cooperation with the Farm Labor Program of Iowa State College Agricultural Extension Service. First prize money of \$250 as the season-long award was distributed among the towns participating within the county and was used for community purposes.

The farm labor program continues this year in Cedar County although the patriotic appeal is gone. Most of the boys who went to war have returned. Our local chairman and county committee are not quite as active as in wartime, but the organization is still at hand to channel labor where it is needed.

By making use of it, we anticipate no great difficulty in filling our local labor needs.

Matching workers and farm jobs is everyday practice in Extension farm labor offices. Here in the Scotts Bluff, Nebr., county office, Harry Amen, supervisor, is at the phone. Virgil Schnider, assistant (seated), is interviewing prospective workers (left), while growers (right), await assignment of men.





# Women did their part, too

■ State Women's Land Army supervisors, most of them drawn from the ranks of home demonstration workers, returned to their regular home demonstration responsibilities shortly after V-J day, richer for their experience in working with farm and home problems from a different angle. They have a better understanding of agriculture and a keener insight into the problems of farm women who do outdoor work in addition to homemaking. The new knowledge of living and working conditions of hired farm workers, tenant farmers, migrant and foreign agricultural workers acquired is being used in expanding the home demonstration program.

The WLA was a movement rather than an organization and included women from farms, cities, and towns—farm women who worked longer hours than usual, taking the place of sons or hired men gone to war or industry—women from offices, factories, and stores—women whose husbands were overseas—housewives, college girls, and teachers. They were women of all ages. Some spent the entire summer on the farm, others a few days, week ends, or a vacation period. Some went to live with the farm family; others lived in camps, but most of the women who did farm work went out from their own homes during peak seasons to help on nearby farms.

More than 2 million placements of women in farm jobs having been made in 1944, 1945, and 1946, mostly for seasonal work.

Nearly every farm woman had extra duties during the war. Wives, daughters, and sisters of farmers helped with haying, milking, feeding livestock, this usually in addition to the housework. These new problems of farm women naturally affected Extension's home demonstration program. An educational program of homemaking short cuts was directed not only to home demonstration club members but to all rural women who could be reached. Emphasis was placed on work simplification, such as rearranging kitchens to save steps and time, preparing one-dish meals, letting some garments go unironed, and closing off part of the house to save heat and cleaning.

Some hurdles had to be overcome regarding the use of town women as a farm labor source during the war.

Farmers were reluctant to use "green labor" of any kind. Many had a decided prejudice against hiring town women, but once the women were recruited and placed, such commendations as these were heard from the growers: "They were quick to learn." "They were conscientious and had dogged perseverance." "They helped us get the job done."

The recruiting job was made easier because women had a driving desire to do their part while husbands and sons were at war.

## Evaluation

Certainly the chief value of the Women's Land Army program to the Nation was the assistance given farmers in a time of labor shortage. Their work was mostly of an emergency nature, but farmers found that what they lacked from a standpoint of physical stamina was often made up for in conscientiousness and efficiency.

Town women gained many friends from their farm work and a deeper understanding of other ways of living.

They were impressed by the skill, toil, and management ability that is needed in successful farming. One girl, impressed by her new knowledge of the amount of work necessary to get milk from the cow to the city doorstep, said: "A bottle of milk will never be just a bottle of milk to me again."

WLA supervisors recruited and placed town women, contacted women's organizations, college placement officers, editors, writers, employers, and personnel managers in business and industry. They helped establish camps for women farm workers in about one-third of the States, arranging for the management and supervision of these camps.

Although their prewar activities had given these home demonstration workers many contacts with farm women, their WLA duties got them even better acquainted with farm problems. They gained new insight into farm employment, both from the farmer's and the hired worker's points of view.



In the light of their wartime experiences these women become more concerned with the problems of homemakers in homes of hired farm workers and the needs of tenant families and seasonal and migrant farm workers. They are searching for new ways to help the woman who is doing the double job of field work and homemaking and who does not meet with an organized group. Should not home demonstration programs, they ask, be planned to meet the needs of more of these homemakers?

What are some of the other benefits derived from their wartime experiences? Certainly home demonstration workers learned anew the value of the radio and news stories to promote a program. As a result they are making greater use of these two media. In addition, publicity given farm women's activities during the war is resulting in continued interest of the public in the problems of farm homemakers.

Considerable impetus was given to work simplification during the war, and this is continuing to hold the interest of farm women who have a long work day even in peacetime. The tours and caravans sponsored by Extension in several States have been a means of reaching more people on the subject of work simplification in the home—farm men as well as women.

New attention, too, has been directed to housing and sanitation facilities for farm tenants and hired labor as well as for farm owners.

It is to be expected that Extension workers will capitalize on the better understanding between rural and urban folks which flourished during the war and will develop new ways and means to take advantage of this wartime growth of appreciation and understanding.

# Farm labor trends

WILLIAM A. SCHOENFELD, Director of Extension, Oregon

■ We are rapidly nearing the end of the so-called prosperity period occasioned by the war. The prosperity of the past few years has been largely predicated upon "blood, sweat, and tears." The economic situation in Europe seems still so nebulous that it is difficult to penetrate. It now seems certain that we shall have many million additional people to feed. The situation calls for sustained high production of staple food items.

The farm labor situation presents many imponderables. Labor unrest is world-wide. We hear much of labor unrest in industry, but very little is generally said about unrest among agricultural laborers. But agriculture is still the largest segment of world industry, and the largest number of workers the world over is to be found there.

The future of the American farm labor program will not resolve itself into "the checking in and out" of labor. We shall need to harmonize conflicting interests of both employer and employee. During my recent visit to the British Isles, I had occasion to observe these interests. Because of the recent war, the British farmer is generally becoming cognizant of the needs other than wages and hours of labor. These other needs they refer to as "social amenities"—better housing, improved sanitation, health, education, recreation, and a fuller rural community life.

## Mechanization Not the Whole Answer

A national standard of living is measured by the extent and use of machines, rather than of man labor. Mechanization during the past 25 years added 55 million more acres of cropland in the United States, with fewer people on the farms. Production efficiency per man increased tremendously. The tractor alone has made possible the use of large and more complicated machines; for example, combines, corn and cotton pickers, large cultivation equipment, pick-up balers, spray rigs, lifting, pulling, pushing, hauling equipment, and many others. Another striking

example is the coordinated use of power harvesting equipment over a wide area. The State Extension Services of the Wheat Belt, Canada included, successfully coordinated the large wheat combine operators, so that wheat was harvested progressively with its ripening from Texas into Canada.

There are some commodities, however, that do not lend themselves to a high degree of mechanization.

Most of the agricultural production in the United States is by family units. Because of this, wages are of direct interest to the farmer operator as well as to the farm laborer. As both are mutually involved in wage levels, it is of interest to them to keep the wages as high as possible commensurate with general economic conditions.

During the past several years, a number of successful farm operators have paid bonuses at the end of the year to their permanent, year-round farm help. We, in Oregon, along with a number of other States similarly situated, now pay bonuses here and there to seasonal workers who have remained throughout the harvest season. We must not overlook the fact that wages alone will not satisfy labor. The "social amenities," previously mentioned, are as much a part of the laborer's pay as the wages. We have seen the need of improvement in rural housing, both for the farmer himself and for his help. I may add that most farmers recognize this need, but the circumstances of the war years and of the immediate present have made it extremely difficult to provide the necessary and desirable housing. However, the future of farm labor housing calls for functional houses for the married year-round help, for bachelor year-round labor, and for the seasonal and transient labor. Many farm labor associations see this need and have taken steps to correct the situation.

As the situation now stands, the rural relief is saddled on the entire



community. Relief should be self-supporting. During the laboring years of a worker's life, regular contributions can be made from wages toward the social-security fund to be drawn upon if and when need arises. There seems to be no sound reason why the whole program of unemployment compensation, physical disability, and old-age retirement cannot be placed on an actuarial basis devoid of charitable aspects.

Adequate medical care should be available to all groups, regardless of income. But it need not be on a charitable basis. Health insurance is available through voluntary health associations. Hospital facilities are generally inadequate in rural communities. Considerable improvement can be made by community effort, by endowments, and through some such plans as the Blue Cross. Pure water supplies, satisfactory sewage disposal, fly and mosquito control, satisfactory though inexpensive toilet facilities are reasonably well understood and in operation in many communities.

As a result of increased mechanization, farming has the highest preventable accident record of all major industries. Much education is needed to reduce this record. In this we have both a challenge and an opportunity.

We, in our work, have a definite responsibility toward the education of the youth of migrant and other agricultural workers. How this can be done is too broad a subject to be covered by a few sentences, but it is a problem to which we should give rather early attention.

In many rural communities which use large numbers of transient workers, the churches have collaborated in providing recreation to the life of a community.

It seems to me that we have a real opportunity of doing some constructive educational and demonstration work, covering farm labor needs, among the several farm labor associations and organizations. We should consider them a good vehicle for educational programs. Agricultural colleges should widen their curricula, so that there may be a better understanding among college graduates in agriculture of the economic and social problems in rural communities.



## 1945 In Farm Labor

The year when program-wide activities were at their height

Communities with organized farm labor programs.....	19, 193
County advisory committees .....	2, 165
Volunteer leaders assisting in program.....	89, 869
Placement offices operated.....	7, 755
Different farmers with whom labor was placed.....	669, 380
Total placement of workers.....	7, 521, 612
Different workers placed (estimated) .....	2, 896, 259
Men .....	1, 794, 379
Women.....	360, 536
Youth.....	741, 344
Interstate workers transported.....	15, 373
Number of camps, assisted by Extension in housing workers.....	404
Workers housed in these camps.....	97, 336
Farmers assisted in making better use of labor and machines .....	944, 293
Persons given instruction in training and use of inexperienced workers.....	108, 096
Workers receiving training.....	339, 571
Farm workers upon whom Selective Service information was furnished.....	625, 782

## Farm labor—action in education

(Continued from page 81)

the act was broadly written permitting maximum flexibility to care for varying State and county situations.

Under Extension leadership the farm labor program got results. In the face of the then all-time record year of 1942, total agricultural production was pushed still higher in 1943; yet higher in 1944, with production in 1945 and 1946 well above 1942. The top point was reached in 1944 when production was 36 percent above the 1935-39 average. During this same period farm employment declined steadily, the lowest point being

reached in 1945 when the supply was 10 percent below the 1935-39 base period.

With world needs calling for high level agricultural production in this country, the emergency farm labor program has been extended throughout 1947. During this reconversion period Cooperative Extension Service is giving attention to adjustments in labor requirements, patterns of migration, employment conditions, and similar problems of concern to both employers and workers made necessary by changes in agricultural production and employment following World War II.

## 62,611 Interstate Workers Moved With Federal Funds

In the 1943-46 period Extension farm labor funds were used wholly or in part in recruiting and transporting 62,611 interstate workers from areas with surplus supply of labor to areas of need. The totals by years were:

1943.....	15, 246
1944.....	21, 515
1945.....	15, 373
1946.....	10, 517

In the movement of these workers the Federal office had the cooperation of 16 States of supply, as follows:

Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Kansas, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Mississippi, Missouri, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, and West Virginia.

■ It is estimated that more than 900,000 farm people will be reached through the county labor-saving shows by the end of 1947. During the past 4 years, 24 States have held these shows. Six States held shows 2 consecutive years. Washington State held the first shows in 1944 in 22 counties. In 1945, 5 States held 170 shows with an average attendance of over 900. Eight States held shows in 1946, and 16 States are planning to hold shows in 1947. So far this year, 211 county shows have been held in 6 States, with an average attendance of 1,110 persons.

## "Livability"

Livability is the most important characteristic of a migrant camp to the people who live in it. Some of the things "livability" covers in concrete terms are: Partitions that go to the ceilings so others can't climb into your apartment and steal, so the neighbors' flies and mosquitoes don't come visiting just when you have sprayed to get rid of your own, so you don't have to heat the whole building in order to heat your own room, so you can have a little privacy.

Livability means having your own kitchen so someone else isn't moving your pans to the back of the stove or putting wood on the fire when you are baking. It means having a table to eat on, chairs to sit on, a cold place to keep food on hot days, and a place to put dishes and pans. It means having running water and a sink and a warm place where you can take a bath or shower with plenty of hot water.

It means having a place to buy the kind of groceries you want. It means being able to enjoy some of your favorite recreation activity when you have free time and being able to go to church on Sunday. It means having a camp that is quiet and orderly so you can sleep at night, a camp that is clean and well managed.—*"The Migrator," New York, September 21, 1946.*

Mrs. Alice Davis, a 71-year-old Lovely, Ky., widow, went to Maine in 1943 to help harvest potatoes. She typified the spirit of American womanhood in demonstrating her prowess by picking 63 barrels of potatoes in a day and averaging 55 barrels daily during the harvest.



# *We Study Our Job*

■ The soundness of any program is largely determined by the factual material on which current operational decisions are made.

Getting the background needed in the States and counties for development of the most constructive and worth-while undertaking has been a joint effort of the Experiment Stations and Extension Services. Where necessary, it has been supplemented by funds and personnel of the Emergency Farm Labor Program. Only a few examples of what has been done can be described here.

**Harvest Labor Efficiency.**—Out of early work on man-labor requirements came a need for evaluating productivity of various types of workers. Many seasonal workers were coming from new sources and youth were becoming more numerous in field work. To determine the actual number of persons needed to harvest a given acreage, some basis was required for adjusting the over-all man labor requirements to fit the kind of help available. Studies made in Oregon on various fruit and vegetable crops were very helpful in pointing out differences in the amount of product picked, resulting from such factors as sex, age, experience, training, and supervision.

**Work Simplification.**—Probably the most fertile source of background material for use in improving utilization of farm labor during the war period has come from work simplification studies conducted by land-grant colleges, under general guidance of a

national project centered at Purdue University. These studies, made on a wide variety of jobs and enterprises, are a systematic analysis of work methods by which the easiest, most effective and economical way to do a job is searched out, developed, and applied. Many farmers have been able to get more and better work done in less time and with less effort by making more efficient use of the labor, materials, and equipment now available. For example:

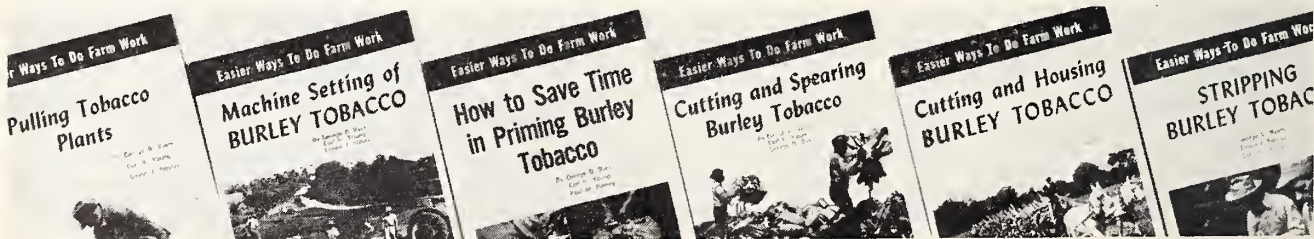
A new method of cutting seed potatoes in Colorado enabled the average farm worker to cut 25 percent more seed potatoes in a day, and do it easier. Picking potatoes directly into a sack suspended from a picking belt increased the picker's output by 20 to 30 percent over use of wire basket under Colorado conditions. Studies of the movement of crews from one field to another resulted in savings of 10 to 15 man-days of labor by one Florida celery company. Kentucky developed improved methods in tobacco work which brought a two-thirds labor saving over the usual methods in pulling plants, over half in machine setting, about 40 percent in hand setting, 25 percent in priming, 20 to 40 percent in cutting and spearing, and 15 percent in stripping. By properly planning arrangement of hog houses, chore travel at spring farrowing may be cut two-thirds on Indiana farms.

**Housing.**—The need for more and better farm labor housing is obvious. To establish a basis for a program surveys are necessary. L. R. Snipes

of Nebraska, summarizes his survey findings:

"... We have completed the housing survey in one sugar-beet factory district; 250 farms were visited, of which 203 had labor houses. We found 96 houses were good enough for seasonal labor to go into now if they were swept out and properly equipped; 68 houses need repairs to make them good houses; and 39 houses were beyond repair and should not be used to house seasonal labor. Now our follow-up will be newspaper and radio publicity, a discussion of better housing at all farm meetings in that county, and a few farm visits, if we find them necessary."

**Employer-Employee Relationships.**—A. B. Love, Michigan farm labor supervisor, is chairman of a committee on employer-employee relationships in the sugar beet industry. The committee, composed of beet growers, county agents, and representatives of sugar beet companies, recommended four specific projects to bring about better working and living conditions for Latin-Americans from Texas who do a large part of the sugar beet work in Michigan. These projects include plans for improvement of housing, medical care, social and recreation services, and for training workers to do a better job. The State and county home demonstration and farm labor staffs will cooperate in the conduct of project 3, "How to live while in Michigan," which includes educational work in nutrition, sanitation, and buymanship.







## Training farm workers

■ Maintaining the efficiency of farm labor during wartime scarcity of experienced help was a special concern of all farmers. They were faced with the problems of breaking in green workers quickly, preventing injuries to these people and damage to equipment and product; and improving the skill of both crews and individuals so that jobs could be done on time.

Now that the emergency is over we do not need to turn back. Much has been learned about the importance of instruction and how to train effectively. This knowledge will continue to be helpful as agriculture strives for greater efficiency.

The amount of output which a properly qualified worker can produce on a given job depends on the method he uses, his skill in using the method, the effort which he exerts, and the conditions under which he works. Progress in labor management will depend on recognition of these basic factors and making them mean something to farmers and hired workers.

The more farm and home work is improved and mechanized, the more new things old workers will have to learn. Training jobs will multiply as better ways to plow, plant, and harvest are discovered.

### Training—Essential for New Workers in California

California farmers have responded eagerly to help offered by farm labor offices in the field of improved labor utilization. Emphasis was placed on improving utilization of regular domestic workers. Adequate supervision and proper training have produced excellent results. For example, in San Bernardino County a training program developed for domestic citrus pickers practically doubled their earnings, decreased the rate of turn-

over, and reduced the cost of picking for the grower.

The farm labor field assistant conducted this training course. He worked with each man individually, telling and demonstrating the tried procedures. Constructive criticism was offered as the picker worked. The trainer did follow-up work with his crew for 3 or 4 days. As a result of the instruction given to these men, they have become regular citrus pickers.

Training of this type for domestic workers had been an important factor in getting citrus pickers in southern California. As earnings are very low until the skill is learned, the turnover is extremely high. Frequently a crew of 25 dwindles to 2 on the second or third day of work. Domestic workers have been very slow to enter the citrus-picking jobs and every inducement in the fields of supervision and training must be offered to get more of them.—*From Annual Report of John J. McElroy, State Farm Labor Supervisor, California.*

### Training Seasonal Workers in New York

In 1946 apple growers indicated more concern than did other groups over improving the work of their harvest hands. They are especially interested in proper handling of fruit to prevent injury. In Wayne County, under sponsorship of a fruit growers' committee, a training program was given to foreign workers and migrants in cooperation with a grower. The response was good because of initiative shown by the farmer in organizing and directing training discussion with pickers. Most workers appreciate the time a farmer spends with them in showing them how he wants a job done.

In Otsego County, 2 days were spent with a group of 60 New York City girls who were unusually eager to receive assistance. Growers were well pleased with the work girls were doing. Their picking rates were not high, but they were doing a careful job. Training increased their output about 30 percent.

An early call for help came from Oneida, Madison, and Chenango Counties, where Jamaican workers were about to enter bean fields. In pea vineries they had been earning good wages which it was feared they would not be able to match in bean picking. A reduction in earnings usually leads to discontent.

Movies, slides, and demonstrations of bean picking were given to 120 Jamaicans, to emphasize how they could earn good wages by following proper picking methods. After instruction a check in the field showed the picking rate for individuals to vary from 5 to 16 baskets a day. The response was not entirely enthusiastic. Some who were really trying found their accomplishment double that of previous days, but many in the low bracket were there because they lacked ambition. There was much complaint about weedy fields, light picking, and low wages. Some growers were not particularly concerned with efforts to improve the work of their pickers.

Work was undertaken with Long Island potato pickers. There was a much better attitude toward training than in the bean fields. A bumper crop made it possible for the average picker to make good wages. However, many workers were wasting time and energy in the field. The emphasis in instruction, using movies and illustrated leaflets, was on how they could accomplish more with less effort.—*From Annual Report, Warren W. Burger, Labor Utilization Specialist, New York.*

# Among Ourselves

■ **RALPH E. BODLEY'S** present address is Senate Office Building, Washington, D. C., and he may be found in the office of Senator Zales Ecton where he is executive secretary. Senator Ecton comes from Gallatin County, Mont., where Ralph was county agent from 1920 to 1934. Bodley became Montana's county agent leader in 1934 and was State farm labor supervisor from 1943 to 1946.

■ **W. C. DAVID** became State leader of Negro agents in Texas on September 1, 1946, following 3 years' work in the Southern States on the farm labor program. In stimulating the recruitment of Negro labor, David emphasized the importance of their taking farm jobs and staying with them while wages were high and saving their earnings for a rainy day. He had 9 years' experience as county agent and 4 as district agent in Texas.

■ **RICHARD E. SMITH** helped to devise and carry out plans for the use of prisoners of war as farm workers while he was labor relations officer at the Fourth Service Command. He was agricultural agent for 7 years in Clinch County, Ga., before entering the Army, and since his discharge last year has been Georgia's farm labor supervisor.

■ **C. C. RANDALL**, who had a very important part in the development of the extension programs to transport interstate workers and facilitate the movement of migratory workers, passed away in January. His service in Arkansas included 10 years as county agent, 10 as district agent, 4 as assistant and associate director, 4 on the regional staff of the Farm Security Administration, and 4 as South Central area director for the farm labor program.

■ **M. U. MOUNTS**, agricultural agent; **H. L. SPEER**, assistant agricultural agent; and **JACK ROYALS**, farm labor assistant, of Palm Beach County, Fla., were hosts to representatives from 8 other Florida counties and from 9 other States at the meeting on the Atlantic Coast migratory

program, held on March 13 and 14 at West Palm Beach. More than 10,000 of the farm workers who are employed in vegetable production in Palm Beach County during the winter spend the summer and early fall months working in potatoes, fruit, and vegetables in the States from South Carolina to New York.

■ **MRS. MARTHA P. BUTTRICK'S** work with live-in youth began in 1942 when she helped Dorothy Thompson with the Volunteer Land Corps. Her career in the Vermont Extension Service began as 4-H Club agent 1918-20 and was resumed as V. F. V. supervisor 1943-47. She has also worked with Y. W. C. A. in this country and in Europe.

■ **JOHN V. HEPLER** is now carrying the extension gospel to foreign countries as extension specialist in the Department's Office of Foreign Agricultural Relations. He started his extension career as agricultural agent in Ford County, Kans., in 1917. Since then he has been district supervisor in Kansas, extension director in South Dakota, North Central area director for the farm labor program and a member of an Agricultural Mission to the Philippines.

## EXTENSION SERVICE REVIEW

Published monthly by direction of the Secretary of Agriculture as administrative information required for the proper transaction of the public business, and with the approval of the Bureau of the Budget as required by Rule 42 of the Joint Committee on Printing. The REVIEW is issued free by law to workers engaged in extension activities. Others may obtain copies from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D. C., at 10 cents per copy or by subscription at \$0.75 a year, domestic, and \$1.15 foreign. Postage stamps are not acceptable in payment.

Prepared in the  
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EXTENSION SERVICE  
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

■ **FLORENCE L. HALL** was one of a few alumni of Michigan State College who received recognition for noteworthy achievement during the celebration of the golden anniversary of the establishment of the College of Home Economics. Miss Hall, who was national leader of the Women's Land Army, 1943-45, is field agent in home demonstration work for the Northeastern States.

■ **MRS. MILDRED MURPHY FARLEY**, New Jersey's State Club Leader, and formerly in charge of the Women's Land Army in that State, recently added Farley to her name. Prof. A. J. Farley has been extension specialist in pomology for many years. Both intend to continue their official positions in the Extension Service.

■ **R. G. FOWLER, JR.**, assistant to the western area director, assembles and distributes information regarding needs for migratory workers in the seven far-western States. Bob, son of the county agricultural agent of Jackson County, Oreg., was a member of the Colorado Extension Service before entering the Army. In 1946, as farm labor information assistant, he spark-plugged the publicity program that helped to get large numbers of people into the Oregon harvests.

■ **MRS. SADIE BENNETT**, of the Hood River, Oreg., office says, "I believe that I have a lead on a very interesting educational program that is going to be worked out by one grower. When I mentioned the subject of training workers to Bill Perry, as he waited for a worker, he opened right up with his plans. He said that he and his father were so convinced that a great deal could be done that they had planned to buy a projector for Christmas and take pictures of pruning, ladder placing, and other operations. He said he spent hours telling his workers what to do and he thought he could explain better by pictures. He believes the principles of pruning are the same, even if each grower has some special points he wishes to bring out."